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verse (p. 3), in which in 1793 he gave the world warning of what was in store for it:

"'Tis true my Muse to love inclines,
And wreaths of Cyprias' myrtle twines;
Quits all aspiring lofty views,
And chants what Nature's gifts infuse."

Nothing could be better than this as an indication of what he felt inspired to do, and we can no more find heart to regret it than we can that Theodore Hook did not take to preaching sermons, or that Sheridan did not devote his life to African missions. Some of the verses which Mr. Shepherd has rescued from oblivion are well worth preserving; as, for instance, the "Songs of the Church, No. II.," an excellent poetical parody of Shenstone's—

"I have found out a gift for my fair."

In the notes for Byron's life, too (p. 423), there is a valuable hint (we do not recollect whether it is given in the life itself or not) that should be read and pondered by any one who proposes to examine the evidence in Mrs. Stowe's attack on the poet's private life. Moore says:

"The pride of personating every description of character, evil as well as good, influenced, as we have seen, but too much of his conduct. . . . To such a perverse length, indeed, did he sometimes carry this fancy for self-defamation, that if, as he himself in moments of depression supposed, there was any tendency to derangement in his mental faculties, on this point alone could it be pronounced to have showed itself. . . . I have known him, when a little under the influence of wine, as we have sat together after dinner, to fall seriously into one of these dark and self-accusing moods, and throw out hints of his past life and its deeds, with an air of mystery, designed evidently to evoke curiosity and interest. . . . I have little doubt that, to produce effect at the moment, there is hardly any crime so dark of which, in the excitement of this acting upon the imagination of others, he would not hint that he had been guilty; and it has sometimes occurred to me that the real secret cause of his lady's separation from him, round which herself and her legal advisers have thrown such a formidable mystery, may after all have been nothing more than some dramatic trial of his own fancy and of her credulity, some invention in the dramatic guise of confession of undefined horrors meant merely to mystify, his temptation to such tricks being increased by the precise character of his hearer, but which the lady, unluckily for both, so little understood him as to take seriously."

4.—*Reminiscences and Anecdotes of Daniel Webster.* By PETER HARVEY. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1877. 8vo, pp. x.-480.

MR. HARVEY'S book is one of those which is sure to have what the French call a *succès d'estime*. It is written about a distin-

guished man by an intimate friend, contains what purports to be interesting or amusing anecdotes relating to him and his friends, and important hitherto unpublished reminiscences. Yet we have searched the book in vain for any indication that Mr. Webster was a great or even interesting person. We know that he was; but Mr. Harvey almost makes us doubt it. We cannot help asking ourselves, as we read Mr. Harvey's prosing pages, whether this is indeed the great Webster who argued the Dartmouth College case, who made the Ashburton treaty, and whose dispatches and speeches on matters of public law are not less authorities than the treatises of Grotius and Wheaton, or whether it is not rather some local political hack unknown beyond the bounds of his petty borough, whose fast-waning fame is fanned again into a temporary blaze as an excuse for the publication of this volume. Mr. Harvey takes us through the statesman's early years, exhibits him to us as a law-student, at the bar, in public life, in his intercourse with his contemporaries, and at home; gives us his traits of character, his religious thoughts and feelings, and even takes us into the confidence of his last moments and death-bed; and yet after all is done we know little more of Mr. Webster than before, and what is worse we know a great deal more of a person toward whom at the outset we entertained no unkind feelings, but for whom our regard diminishes in warmth with the growth of our acquaintance—we mean the author. The book might be called "*Webster's Reminiscences of Harvey*," so certainly and so minutely does it make us acquainted with the peculiarities of the latter. Not that it is an egotistic book; far from it. Mr. Harvey's abasement of himself in the presence of his idol is profound; but there are certain qualities of his which shine through his modesty, and will not let us have any peace. As his tale goes on, we feel that there is being photographed upon our mind's eye an image not of Webster, but of Harvey himself, the devout biographer worshiping his great friend, but worshiping him without knowledge, and wholly misunderstanding and misrepresenting him. Many of his reminiscences would have been better not remembered, some of his anecdotes not told.

There are, of course, stories worth telling. Often Mr. Harvey catches a gleam of Mr. Webster's humor, and reproduces it faithfully; as (in a small way) in the case of the nicknames he was in the habit of giving his favorite fowling-pieces, the "*Learned Selden*" and the "*Wilmot Proviso*;" and here and there we find something with regard to public matters, or the practice of his profession, which deserved a memorandum. For instance, we may mention the curious-

ly-verified prophecy made after he had failed to receive the nomination at Baltimore (in 1852), looking forward to the ruin of the Whig party, declaring that its downfall had begun when it began to take "available" instead of well-qualified men as candidates; that General Scott would not receive the electoral vote of six States; that Pierce would be elected, and that after the 4th of November the Whig party would cease to exist.

Again, Mr. Harvey unwittingly now and then reveals Mr. Webster's failings in a curious way; the following extract from a letter we should hardly have expected to find carefully preserved by a sincere admirer of Mr. Webster:

"For my part, though I like the investigation of particular questions, I give up what is called the science of political economy. There is no such science. There are no rules on these subjects so fixed and invariable that their aggregate constitutes a science. I believe I have recently run over twenty volumes from Adam Smith to Prof. Dew; and, from the whole, if I were to pick out with one hand all mere truisms, and with the other all the doubtful propositions, little would be left."

The passages which describe Webster's advice to Mr. Harvey to vote for Pierce would have had light cast upon them by mention of the fact that his son Fletcher Webster retained his lucrative Federal office at the port of Boston under the incoming Administration. But Mr. Harvey's services in detaching the Webster Whigs may be held to have deserved that recognition; they were assiduous and successful. It is only just to this duller Boswell, who possessed at least the greatest of those qualities which aroused the enthusiasm of Carlyle in the self-effacing and admiring biographer of Dr. Johnson, to say that his reserve is complete where he might have told so much, in respect to the chronic pecuniary straits which would have disclosed the weakness of his idol.

The volume ends with a full report of the unveiling of Ball's colossal statue of Webster in the Central Park of New York, an occasion remarkable by the orations of Mr. Evarts and Mr. Winthrop, and the absence of Webster's most intimate friend now living, his only surviving literary executor and his biographer, the accomplished lawyer and publicist, Mr. George Ticknor Curtis, who divides with Rufus Choate and Edward Everett the honor, which Peter Harvey has so sadly missed, of being the faithful custodian of an exceeding and just fame.
